

BLOOD AND BRAVADO – Eye of the Tide P1

An AD&D 2nd Edition Encounter for the Amedio Sandbox Campaign by Falln

Location: Champion's District – near the Arena gates

Time: Late afternoon, just before a major arena bout

SETUP

A scream cuts the dusty air. A vendor's cart splinters as a gray-skinned beast bellows and charges through the Arena gates. Spectators scatter—one man, stone to the knees, still reaching for help. A red-faced arena official is shouting at a pair of armored brutes while a group of spectators blocks the exits. A bloodied trainer collapses at the PCs' feet, gasping:

"They released the beast too early—it's loose—gods help us!"
Suddenly, a howl echoes from the stone corridors of the arena. A hulking form leaps over a railing and barrels into the street.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

- An exotic beast, a gorgon, was imported by **Zelkarune's Horns** to spice up the games but escaped early due to sabotage.
- The **saboteur**, a Scarlet Brotherhood agent posing as an arena clerk, wanted chaos as a distraction for a diplomatic burglary.
- The **beast** is panicked and hostile, smashing carts and statues, and threatening bystanders.
- A local **gladiator** may try to intervene, more for fame than aid.

- **Zelkarune's Horns** are trying to contain the situation quietly, worried the fiasco will damage their reputation. But the two horns' enforcers disagree how to handle the situation.
- **Mavrin "Redhand" Kalvoss** is accepting bets from bystanders.
- Champion's Patrol Guards arrives in 1d3 rounds.

STATISTICS

Panicked Gorgon (1) AC 2; MV 9; HD 8; hp 47; #AT 1 (gore); Dmg 2d8; SA: Breath weapon – petrifying gas (30 ft. cone, save vs. petrification or turned to stone); AL N; XP 3,000; THAC0 13

Notes: Frightened, aggressive. Will charge at visible threats or sudden movement. Avoids fire.

Selvek Armath, Scarlet Brotherhood Agent (Clerk Disguise, Human Thief L3) AC 6 (leather under robes); MV 12; HD 3; hp 14; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger, poisoned); SA: Thief skills, escape artist; AL LE; XP 120; THAC0 19 Thief Skills: MS 45%, HS 40%, PP 35%, OL 30%, CW 60%, DN 25%

Notes: Disguised. Will flee or blend into crowd unless cornered. Has orders to meet a contact near the Scarlet Embassy.

Kaelin Drest, Zelkarune Handler (Human Fighter L2) AC 5 (chainmail); MV 12; HD 2; hp 16; #AT 1;



Dmg 1d8 (spear); AL LN; XP 65; THAC0 19

Notes: Brave but hesitant. May aid PCs if they take charge or rescue bystanders. "Focus on the people first. The beast can wait."

Zelkarune's Horns Enforcer (Human Fighter L2)

AC 5 (chainmail); MV 12; HD 2; hp 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (gladius); AL LN; XP 65; THAC0 19

Notes: Trained to subdue exotic beasts and maintain public order. Will prioritize non-lethal methods if civilians are present. Loyal to Zelkarune's Horns, but may defer to competent adventurers during high-risk situations.

- **Torvak Haldrin** – The Veteran Horn "This wasn't the beast's fault. Some fool let it out. We need it breathing."
- **Imari Vale** – The Firebrand Recruit "Let the thing bleed! The people came for blood, and I'll give it to them!"

Gladiator Fanboys (1d4+1, Commoner L0)

AC 10; MV 12; HD 0; hp 3 each; #AT 0; Dmg: None (unarmed); AL N; XP 7 each

Notes: Cause chaos, attempt to "help" by waving swords or shouting advice. May get in the way.

Mavrin "Redhand" Kalvoss (Human Expert L2)

AC 9 (robes); MV 12; HD 2; hp 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (inkknife); AL LN; XP 35; THAC0 20

Notes: Licensed bookmaker for the Sasserine Arena. Obsessed with odds, reputation, and clean ledgers. Will not fight unless cornered—prefers bribes, persuasion, or running. Recognizes faces, betting patterns, and strange shifts in crowd behavior. May know who placed unusual bets on the gorgon match.

Champion's Patrol Guards (1d6+2) AC 5 (chainmail + shield); MV 12; HD 1+1; hp 8 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (longsword) or 1d4+1 (truncheon); AL LN; XP 35; THAC0 19 **Stats:** Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

Notes: Brave, disciplined, and highly visible. Will engage the gorgon only if the public is endangered and a coordinated strike is possible. May detain those interfering with "official containment procedures."

Champion's Watch Sergeant (Optional, 1 in 3 chance)

AC 4 (chainmail + Dex); MV 12; HD 2; hp 14; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+1 (longsword); AL LN; XP 65; THAC0 19 **Stats:** Str 15, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 12

Notes: Authoritative, sharp-eyed, and not easily fooled. May recognize the Scarlet agent's disguise. Will take control of the scene if chaos escalates. If PCs are respectful and show initiative, may defer command.

Optional: Crowd Panic Level (0–5):

Each round the gorgon acts unimpeded, increase by 1.

- ◆ At 2: Guards arrive hostile.
- ◆ At 4: another group of guards arrive
- ◆ At 5: Noble bystanders are injured—negative reputation shift -1 for the PC's

ITEM: SABOTAGED COLLAR

Detect Magic: faint transmutation aura

Description: A spiked iron collar with sigils meant to suppress breath weapons (non-functional after sabotage).

Value: 250 gp to a collector or mage; 50 gp as scrap

Effect: Can be repaired with the Mending spell + Intelligence check. If worn and active, grants +4 to saves vs. gorgon breath.

CHECKS

- **Wisdom check:** Spot the panicked gorgon before it rounds the corner
- **Intelligence check:** Recognize the collar as magical restraint gear, not decorative
- **Tracking (proficiency):** Spot hoofprints or signs of sabotage in the Arena tunnels
- **Detect Magic:** See tampering traces on the collar or subtle spell residue
- **Charisma (reaction roll):** Calm the crowd or gain aid from the Handler
- **Pick Pockets / Detect Noise:** Notice the Brotherhood agent slipping away in the confusion

REWARDS AND OUTCOMES

- **Beast Calmed or Defeated:** Zelkarune's Horns offer 50 gp per party member and favor in future arena dealings
- **Agent Captured:** Clue leads to stolen documents hidden in a statue near the Scarlet Embassy
- **Public Rescued:** +1 reputation bonus in Champion's and Noble Districts for one week
- **Failure (Beast Escapes):** The gorgon disappears into the sewers. May reappear later, mutated by unknown forces
- **Loot:**
 -  Gorgon scales (1d4 × 10 gp each, alchemical use)
 -  Agent's satchel: map of embassy interior, coded scroll ("Eyes of the Tide" mission), 10 gp in rare coin
- **Gladiator Sponsorship:** If a PC distinguishes themselves during the chaos—through combat or crowd control—they may attract the attention of a noble patron seeking to sponsor a new arena champion. This grants social access, minor financial support, and potential entry into future arena-related plots.

EYE OF THE TIDE MISSION

This is the first phase of the Eye of the Tide Mission, Phase two will take place during another encounter. If the PC's can capture Selvek and his mission objective, the brotherhood will simply continue their plan and send another agent. They will deny any involvement.

Scarlet Brotherhood Directive 77-14

Objective:

To install influence agents within **Zelkarune's Horns** and disrupt city morale by triggering a public catastrophe during an arena event—thereby justifying further

surveillance, tighter security, and Brotherhood involvement in the district's political affairs.

Phases of the Operation

Phase I – Breach of Beast

- Sabotage a caged exotic beast scheduled for an arena fight.
- Ensure it escapes into a populated area during peak hours.
- Allow public casualties to generate fear and demand change.

Phase II – Ash in the Arena

- Smuggle a scroll case containing enchantment glyphs into the Arena vaults (meant to weaken key gladiators' minds before major bouts).
- Use these glyphs to discredit or “corrupt” rising champions seen as local heroes.

Phase III – The Eye Opens

- During the confusion, agents disguised as medics or guards slip into **Champion's Garrison** to steal sealed records identifying the district's military response protocols.
- Optional: Assassinate or compromise a prominent Zelkarune's Horns leader to create a vacuum.

Phase IV – Withdraw and Whisper

- Leave behind false clues pointing toward **Shadowshore gangs** or a rival noble faction.
- Meet at the **Scarlet Embassy's storm cellar gate** to deliver intel and regroup.

Encoded Scroll Fragment (Found on Selvek Armath):

"The tide must turn from within. The people shall cry for order. The Eye watches, and the gate will open when they kneel."

Whether the PCs quell the beast or let it run loose, the city now whispers about cracks in the Horns' armor—and someone is watching.